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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 15th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 30 September 1991, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. SHIHABI (Saudi Arabia)

later: Datuk ABDULLAH Ahmad Badawi (Malaysia)
(Vice-President)

- Address by Mr. Rodrigo Borja, President of the Republic of Ecuador

- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by

Mr. Al-Said (Oman)

Prince Saud Al-Faisal (Saudi Arabia)

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Mr. Manglapus (Philippines)

Mr. Gros Espiell (Uruguay)

Mr. Wong (Singapore)

Mr. Sey (Gambia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. RODRIGO BORJA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ECUADOR

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): The Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Republic of Ecuador.

Mr. Rodrigo Borja, President of the Republic of Ecuador, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Ecuador, His Excellency Mr. Rodrigo Borja, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President BORJA (interpretation from Spanish): The international order born out of the Second World War is dead. We have seen an end to a stage in history marked by the cold war, the bipolar division of world power and the division of the planet into two major areas of influence where small countries were mere geopolitical pawns of the major Powers and where mankind was subjected to the balance of terror. With the most recent world events, a new epoch in history has dawned. It is characterized, from a political standpoint, by the democratization of formerly authoritarian, centralized societies; in the economic field, by the establishment of major blocs, the opening up of markets, the removal of customs barriers and the free flow of goods, services, capital, technology and other production factors; on the international scene, by détente and the search for peace; and in the military sphere, by disarmament and the dismantling of the two major strategic alliances, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact, which for so long kept mankind in a state of anxiety, living under the constant threat of death.

(President Borja)

These changes took place so rapidly that we have barely been able to study them, interpret them or fully grasp their hidden meaning. That is because history is being made at an increasingly rapid pace as a result of scientific and technological progress. Changes in human society are now occurring more rapidly in one decade than they used to in the span of a century.

I would even say that the twentieth century is over, that it was born with the First World War - in 1914 - and ended with the crumbling of the Berlin Wall. Major events in the life of mankind are epoch-making and constitute milestones in history. Just as in the year 476 the downfall of the Roman Empire signalled the end of ancient times and the start of the Middle Ages; just as in 1492 the discovery of America gave rise to the modern era; just as the French Revolution is the demarcation between the modern era and our contemporary world; and just as the explosion of the atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki ushered in the current era - so the fall of the Berlin Wall signified the end of the twentieth century. For that was not merely a wall that divided a city into two parts, but the symbol of the implacable hostility between two philosophical, political, economic and social systems.

Events in the Soviet Union, viewed from the standpoint of philosophical history, signify the fall of one of the major empires, for from the dialectical standpoint those events are only ephemeral stages in history. All products of nature, man, history and culture arise, develop, reach their zenith and then decline. This has happened throughout history, with the Persian, Roman, Muslim and Ottoman Empires, as well as with the many other power centres that arose over the centuries.

(President Borja)

Marxism has failed in practice. Those who embraced it strayed from its original essentially liberating intent: they hastened on the path of authoritarianism; they imposed upon their societies the aberration of a single-party system; they suppressed the fertile power of freedom; they perpetuated the dictatorship of the proletariat, which through a series of supplantations resulted in the party replacing the proleteriat, the apparat, the party, and the leadership, the apparat; and, ultimately, they placed power in the hands of a small group of eminent leaders who made all the decisions, who commanded and countermanded, did and undid everything in their respective societies.

On the other hand, the stratification of the means of production clearly resulted in a loss of the dynamism in their economies. Government control over the means of production soon led to the class interests of the high echelons of bureaucracy, and with that there re-emerged the old contradiction - which had already been condemned in the 1848 Communist Manifesto - between the oppressor and the oppressed. However, while that may be so, and while the political and economic theses of Marxism may have failed in their historical applications, one cannot but credit them for having been the first to denounce the insensitive moral values of an unjustly structured society; the abuses of the unbridled capitalism of the nineteenth century, and the economic selfishness of the ruling classes. Paradoxically, I would even say that the theses of Marxism failed in practice, but none the less they compelled the world to change course.

With the East-West controversy fading away, the North-South economic contradiction between the wide-ranging, dominant developed world and the backward, dependent developing world is becoming apparent.

(President Borja)

As regards Latin America, we are living through the paradoxical and tragic situation of a political democracy achieved after many years of great endeavour and of economic underdevelopment resulting in social injustice, want and dependency on the outside world. In reality, we have but scraps of democracy - that is, political democracy - but we lack economic and social democracy.

Indeed, never before have the frontiers of political democracy been as wide as they are today in Latin America; never have so many countries lived under democratic regimes in our region. Virtually all Latin American countries have Governments elected by popular vote. But political progress has not been translated into economic prosperity and social well-being. On the contrary, our democratic systems have inherited the heavy burden of crisis: reduced income, deterioration in the quality of life of the peoples, disproportionately high debt as compared with ability to pay, decrease in the influx of fresh capital for our economic development, serious problems in the external sector, worrisome macroeconomic disorders, long-suppressed social demands - and all this hand in hand with well-known structural deficiencies.

(President Borja)

This brings about at least two dangers: the first is that the democratic regimes find themselves in a situation in which they cannot provide appropriate answers and satisfactory solutions when they have to meet the long-standing, legitimate demands of their peoples; secondly, there is the issue of the ability to govern societies tormented by so many social problems. Clearly, this makes the task of government an extremely difficult enterprise. Our democracies are sailing through dangerous waters, and in the midst of the tempest we Latin American statesmen are trying to maintain the course, without abandoning our democratic goals and with an open debate of ideas with respect to human rights and a free press.

The United Nations has carried out an exceptionally important mission over the past 46 years in the maintenance of peace and security in the world. The United Nations had to face so many storms arising out of the cold war: the question of Palestine; the many conflicts in the Middle East; the Korean war; the problem of the Congo; the division of Cyprus; the civil war in the Dominican Republic in 1965; the dispute between India and Pakistan; the Viet Nam war; the Afghanistan conflict, whose settlement was the first step in the process of East-West détente and in which the Ecuadorian Foreign Minister, Diego Cordovez, played a major role; the question of Angola; the problem of Namibia; the pacification of Central America; the Iraq-Kuwait war; and so many other conflicts which were faced with resolve and with prudence by the world Organization.

Nevertheless, the new conditions in which the world is living demand that the United Nations play a new role. The cold war ended, but today we must wage war against poverty. We must finance peace instead of war. We must work for life and not for death. We must create a more ethical and rational world. The economic and social challenges are at the forefront of our task.

(President Borja)

Improving the quality of life of our peoples is an imperative, and international social justice is a prerequisite to establishing peace in the world. Therefore new prospects are opening up to the United Nations in the field of development and in promoting the human dimension of economic development, particularly with regard to the more backward areas of the globe.

Let me take this opportunity to express on behalf of my Government and people our most resolute support for the initiative taken by the United Nations Economic and Social Council to convene a summit meeting to deal more thoroughly with social development and seek new ways capable of assessing human development more precisely.

Peace is a universal, indivisible benefit, and we must realize that when peace anywhere is threatened world peace is also undermined. This principle becomes increasingly important in scope and stature in relations among States. The people of Ecuador wish to live in peace. Ecuador is in fact an oasis of peace. To us, peace is the main economic resource for our development. We want to have peace based on justice, peace understood as respect for the rights of others, in accordance with the clear and always timely definition of the famous Mexican leader of the last century, Benito Juarez.

That peace must be linked to respect for the Amazonian rights of my country - a topic I should like to raise in the Assembly. Ecuador and Peru have for many years had a territorial dispute which remains unresolved. This problem continues to affect peace, security and regional integration, and it has long posed potentially dangerous tensions for the region. My Government has dealt with this subject with the utmost seriousness and responsibility.

(President Borja)

As is well known, I came to power after three tries - that means that I had to go through three electoral campaigns, during which I made thousands of speeches. Yet, never in those speeches did I make use of the issue of the territorial problem with Peru, because I always felt that this question was of such importance to the very destiny of my country that it was inadmissible to bring it up in electoral campaign speeches. Ever since I became President, I have striven to create a climate of détente and cordiality with Peru to allow us to find a peaceful settlement of the problem. I was the first Ecuadorian President to visit Peru in the entire history of our country. Reciprocally, Alan Garcia was the first Peruvian Head of State to come to Ecuador. On 22 May of last year in the Inca ruins at Machu Picchu, in Peru, at the inauguration of the summit meeting of Presidents of the Andean Group, I stated

> "The two visits stem from our mutual desire to create a climate of détente, peace, tranquillity, cordiality, understanding and mutual confidence, a climate in which at some point of time we shall be able to discuss our bilateral problems regarding which we have opposing views and opinions."

My conduct at all times has shown that I want peace and that I want to see peaceful solutions to our problem. With the moral authority vested in me, and in view of the fact that my country has at all times adhered to the tenets of the Charter on the peaceful settlement of international disputes, the rejection of territorial acquisition by force and the refusal to acknowledge that military victory creates rights, I call upon Peru from this highest and most prestigious rostrum available to mankind to settle peacefully our long-standing problem and territorial dispute through the arbitration of Pope John Paul II. Arbitration is one of the peaceful means for the settlement of disputes recognized by international law. It demonstrated its

(President Borja)

effectiveness in the settlement of the dispute between Argentina and Chile not long ago on the Beagle question. The people of Ecuador and the people of Peru, both profoundly Christian, will abide by such a decision with respect. I propose to Peru that we live in peace and that we work together to foster development, social justice and the improvement of the quality of life of our peoples.

(President Borja)

I call upon Peru to join with us to decrease military expenditures, so that we may devote our best efforts, energies and financial resources to productive endeavours.

I urge Peru to open an era of peace and mutual trust between our countries so that, free from the fear of the horrors of war, we may move forward together along the path of progress. I urge the Head of State of Peru and all the other Heads of State of South American countries to declare solemnly our region a zone of peace. Let us develop a concept of democratic security in keeping with economic and human development needs. Let us abandon the use or threat of force in the settlement of disputes. Let us make our borders places for encounter and friendship. Let us say "no" to armaments and "no" to the nuclearization of Latin America. I propose this in the name of equity, justice and peace - all values of mankind's civilized coexistence.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of Ecuador for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Rodrigo Borja, President of the Republic of Ecuador, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. AL-SAID (Oman) (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. President, may I at the outset convey to you our heartfelt congratulations on your election to the presidency of the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Your competence and experience are well known as well as the faith of your country, Saudi Arabia, has bestowed on the principles and ideals of the United Nations Charter are the best guarantee for the success of the session.

(Mr. Al-Said, Oman)

I should also like to offer my deep appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Guido de Marco, for the sincere efforts that he and the other members of the bureau have exerted to bring the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly to a successful conclusion.

On behalf of my country, I should like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his continued efforts to enhance the credibility of the United Nations in accordance with the noble principles of this international Organization and, in the same way, to promote international peace and cooperation.

May I also place on record my country's appreciation for the efforts made by the Secretary-General in the course of last year with a view to finding a peaceful settlement of the Kuwait crisis. We also wish to thank him for his continued efforts to resolve the Middle East hostage problem.

It is encouraging to note that the increased influence of the United Nations is accompanied by the enlargement of its membership and the enhancement of its universal character. My country welcomes the admission to membership in the United Nations of the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, hoping that their admission will pave the way for lasting peace in the Korean peninsula. I should also like to welcome the admission to membership in the United Nations of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Estonia and the Republic of Latvia. We wish them every success for a more stable and more prosperous future.

(Mr. Al-Said, Oman)

The current session is being convened at an outstanding epoch in the history of international relations, especially the history of the United Nations. Never before have the East and West entertained such positive relations which have, in large measure, contributed to the creation of an opportunity for the successful settlement of many pending international problems.

We have, therefore, to take advantage of the favourable international climate and should have no hesitation in benefiting from the opportunity to save the next generation from the scourge of war, to preserve the dignity of man and to enhance security and stability on the basis of the principle of the sovereignty of States, justice, respect for law and constructive cooperation among all States. These concepts are inseparable from the foundations on which the United Nations was built.

(Mr. Al-Said, Oman)

We are all duty-bound to preserve these lofty notions, with a view to bringing, to present and future generations, happiness, security, prosperity, and freedom from violence, instability and confrontation.

Through this Organization, the international community has called for freedom and cooperation. Hence, it is incumbent upon the United Nations to spare no effort in preventing itself from being used as a means of inflicting suffering on mankind. Instead, it should be utilized as a vehicle for development and cooperation among nations.

The Kuwait crisis was the greatest test of the present world order after the cold war. With God's blessing, the new order passed the test and a great triumph for the United Nations was achieved. The international community has decisively demonstrated that international relations must be governed by international law and that the use of force in settling disputes between States runs counter to international legitimacy.

Once again, my Government expresses its deep appreciation to all the brotherly and friendly States that hastened to support the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. That support constitutes a genuine precedent in international cooperation. On this occasion, I should like to convey my country's gratitude for the courageous and decisive stand taken by the international community, and especially the stand of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which spared no effort in supporting the rule of law and in implementing the United Nations resolutions.

Being located on the Strait of Hormuz, my country is fully aware of its great responsibilities. Hence, we have endeavoured to play a constructive role in the establishment of regional security in the Gulf. We have been working along with our brethren in the GCC on future security arrangements at

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the Gulf, Arab and international levels, in an effort to bring about security and stability. In this context, we have always consulted with our neighbours in the Gulf, especially the Islamic Republic of Iran.

I must say that, despite the problems in the aftermath of the crisis, amidst the horrible tragedies, great suffering and loss of life, there is room for hope. I may even go so far as to say that our steady progression towards international peace is gaining momentum, simply because we have a common interest in peace, stability and economic prosperity. Our awareness of this common interest and our striving to promote it have led us to believe that regional cooperation will replace antagonism and confrontation so that we may look forward to a better future.

The Gulf crisis demonstrated that security and stability in the region are closely linked to the world economy. The developed countries were not alone in suffering economically as a result of the crisis. The developing and poorer nations too were hit hard by unstable oil prices and the halt in trade. That fact makes us realize that regional security arrangements are made not solely to ensure security and stability in the Gulf region, but also to serve the interests of the entire international community.

The Palestinian problem has been the main source of instability and dispute in the Middle East. Until and unless that problem, as well as the other problems pending between the Arabs and the Israelis, is resolved, the chances of further crises in the Middle East will be, unfortunately, greater. For the sake of peace in the entire world, the Palestinian problem should therefore be settled.

Believing in the importance of constructive dialogue, my country has supported international endeavours to find a peaceful, lasting and just

(Mr. Al-Said, Oman)

solution to the Palestinian question on the basis of international legitimacy and United Nations resolutions. In this regard, we welcome the United States efforts to convene a peace conference on the Middle East between the Arab States and Israel. We also welcome the positive response to that conference by the Arab parties directly concerned with the question.

The Sultanate of Oman's support for peace will not recede or give in to despair. We have supported all efforts to find a peaceful solution and we are confident that the Arab States are truly serious in their search for peace.

Three years ago, the Palestinian National Council adopted an historic resolution which paved the way for peace. It was unfortunate, though, that Israel responded with more intransigence by continuing its occupation and suppression of the defenceless inhabitants of the occupied Palestinian territories.

We sincerely hope that Israel will not miss this historic opportunity and that it will enter into serious negotiations with the Arab States in order to bring lasting and comprehensive peace to the area. We call upon the States that have good relations with Israel to convince it to halt its policy of building Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories and to stop oppressing the Palestinians, because that policy constitutes a major obstacle to serious negotiations for peace.

From this rostrum, we call on all the States of the world to make every possible effort to bring about peace on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). In that respect, the United Nations bears a special responsibility to do its best to implement its resolutions. Then we will see the dawn of the new international order in the Middle East, and only then will peace prevail between the peoples of the area.

(Mr. Al-Said, Oman)

We have seen greater progress in other parts of the Middle East. In Lebanon, we followed with satisfaction the positive steps taken by the Lebanese Government in the implementation of the Taif agreement. We are optimistic that security and prosperity will prevail in all parts of Lebanon. Once again, we call on the international community to seek the implementation of Security Council resolution 425 (1978), which provides for the withdrawal of Israel from Lebanese territory.

The situation in Afghanistan calls for further efforts. My country pays tribute to the United Nations for its efforts to find a peaceful settlement to the Afghan question, the latest of which is the Secretary-General's peace plan of 22 May 1990. However, there are about 5 million Afghan refugees. Two million handicapped Afghans have been waiting for an end to the bloodshed, not to mention a million or more people who have lost their lives since the outbreak of the crisis. Such tremendous suffering requires a decisive and definitive solution based on an enlarged national Government and the return of refugees to their homes.

Only six years have elapsed since Oman established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. Those years have witnessed many great events that have altered the character of the Soviet Union, as well as that of the rest of the Eastern European States, which was impossible for anyone to foresee at that time.

(Mr. Al-Said, Oman)

The greater part of credit for those developments in the Soviet Union goes to those men who have led the campaign of reform and openness with a great deal of courage and determination. Their names will go down in history as symbols of freedom and peace at this stage which was brought about thanks to their policies. Perestroika and glasnost, adopted by the leadership in the Soviet Union since 1985, have paved the way for the emergence of Soviet leadership personalities with a considerable measure of determination and courage and a sense of responsibility.

Here I cannot but pay a tribute, once again and on behalf of my country, to the Soviet people and to the Republic of Russia for its positive stand vis-à-vis the events of last month. The failure of the coup and the restoration of legitimacy to the Soviet Union are truly a great victory for world peace and yet another triumph for the new world order.

There are many indicators that there is progress towards peace. There is more room for the United Nations to play a full role in the settlement of disputes. We are very optimistic about Cambodia, South Africa, Cyprus, the Horn of Africa, Central America and the other regions of the world where the peoples have always longed for freedom, security and peace. The United Nations has played a major role in these issues. It is still called upon to make further efforts to solve these and other issues. Despite the heavy load entrusted to the United Nations, being the highest world order it has a special responsibility for so many issues and related problems which surpass the capacities of individual States.

We think it is of paramount importance to lay the foundations of an integrated global strategy for the environment that will preserve the planet's resources for current and coming generations. In this regard, great challenges which will face the Conference on environment and development, to

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be held next year in Brazil. The industrial countries, which have achieved their present positions of strength and prosperity through economic development, have a special responsibility in this respect because their development has set the example which the others have emulated by utilizing the resources of the Earth without due regard to the relationship between the environment and development. Soil erosion, scarcity of water resources, ozone depletion, air pollution and the extinction of certain plant and animal species demonstrate, more than ever before, the need for further efforts to find common principles for the preservation of the global environment. In all this, the industrial countries cannot disassociate themselves from their historic responsibilities. Today the environment in the Gulf is suffering as a result of hundreds of raging oil-well fires in Kuwait. Although commendable efforts are being made to contain the damage left by oil slicks in the Gulf, further international efforts are still needed. Although we take comfort from the cooperation extended to us because we believe that cooperation is necessary for solving problems in the future, we feel that constructive cooperation is the only way to march forward.

There is another international problem, namely, the arms race. My country welcomes the initiative taken by President George Bush last Friday in respect of his country's unilateral reduction of its strategic nuclear armaments. We welcome the steps taken by both the United States and the Soviet Union to limit their nuclear arsenals. We urge them to take further steps in this direction. In our assessment of potential sources of a nuclear threat, we believe that the principal danger emanates from the uncontrolled proliferation of these overkill weapons.

(Mr. Al-Said, Oman)

The world today experiences acute economic problems which know no boundaries. Recently, advancement in the developing world has been sluggish and inflation is rampant. The gap between the North and the South has widened. While we welcome the great achievements of the new world order in the political field, we look forward to the application of the new ideals of that order in the area of economic relations. It is in the interest of all that prosperity comes to the developing world because it is the basis for progress in economic development for every one. On the other hand, we hope that the developing countries will take concrete steps towards market-oriented economic policies that will be a solid foundation for economic progress and prosperity.

We have been following the progress made so far in this regard. However, we note that there remains a lot more that has to be done. While we welcome the debt reduction extended by the developed world, we must note that many developing countries are still groaning under the twin burden of indebtedness and lack of investments. The prospects of progress are limited because of the protectionist economic policies which deny access to the markets of the rich world. Further efforts are also needed to enhance the transfer of technology. Realizing the significance of cooperation, my country is anxious to participate with others in shouldering the common responsibility in this regard, hoping that our region will see new funds to promote investment and development. There is a dire need to reform the world economic order. The new political order cannot be secured in the future without increased economic cooperation between the developing and developed world. Unless these issues are earnestly and comprehensively addressed, the least developed countries will continue to be hostage to their huge burdens, so much so that they can

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claim to have been deprived of the privileges enjoyed by independent States. When sovereignty is denied either through invasion, occupation or economic stagnation, even though it may exist in form but not in essence the seeds of instability and future conflict will find therein a fertile soil. Our gathering together in the United Nations makes us recognize the right of every Member to full sovereignty both in form and in essence. When we stuck together within the framework of the United Nations, we witnessed how the new collective will was able to defend sovereignty in the framework of a changing political world system.

Now we have a genuine opportunity to enhance national sovereignty through collective action to develop the new economic world order. That will not only increase economic opportunities for the least developed and poorer countries, but also effectively and permanently help to maintain international peace and stability.

Finally, we in the Sultanate of Oman look forward with faith and optimism to the day when all peoples of the world represented in this Assembly as sovereign and independent States will have rid themselves of poverty, oppression and aggression in a world of cooperation, security, stability and economic prosperity.

Prince SAUD AL-FAISAL (Saudi Arabia) (interpretation from Arabic): I should like to begin by expressing our thanks and sincere appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Guido de Marco, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Malta, President of the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly, for conducting the work of this body with such ability and wisdom. Our thanks and appreciation go as well to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for the continued efforts he and his assistants in the general Secretariat have ceaselessly exerted in pursuit of the objectives of the United Nations.

I wish to take this opportunity to express on behalf of the Government of the custodian of the two holy mosques our gratitude and appreciation to the international community represented by the General Assembly of the United Nations for the confidence it has entrusted in electing you, Sir, to preside over this forty-sixth session of the General Assembly. While we take great pride in this confidence and trust we wish to assure this august body of the continued support of the custodian of the two holy mosques and his Government for the United Nations and of his commitment to its noble goals and to all efforts aimed at strengthening the role of this body.

Moreover, it is indeed a pleasure to welcome the new Members of the United Nations - the Republics of Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia, hoping that their membership will enhance the effectiveness and universality of collective international action. We also wish the peoples of these countries all stability and progress.

The dramatic events and stunning changes we have witnessed and continue to witness today on the international arena augur well for a major historic transformation now that the authoritarian regimes which were based on futile

(Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Saudi Arabia)

ideological rivalry have begun to collapse and disappear, and the curtain has been rung down on an era of cold wars and heated confrontations. That was an era in which vast human and material resources were wasted in a costly and terrifying arms race and which inflicted great suffering upon a sizeable portion of the international community in the shape of poverty, hunger and disease. That, of course, had negative economic, political and security effects on the entire international community and especially upon the developing countries.

Today, we all witness the shaping of a new international order whose foundations rest upon the principles of the United Nations and its mainstay, namely international legality. That is an international order in which all nations, large and small, rich and poor are equal in exercising their right to sovereignty, independence and living in peace; an international order which safeguards the internationally recognized boundaries of each country and does not tolerate interference by one nation in another's internal affairs and which recognizes and respects the right of all peoples to self-determination and sovereignty over their resources; an international order in which there is no place for hegemony and tyranny nor for political blackmail; and an international order which adopts peaceful means for the settlement of disputes and renounces the use of force or the threat thereof for the purpose of realizing expansionist goals or economic ambitions. We as Muslims welcome these historic transformations and look forward to strengthening the foundation of this new order and employing its principles in the interests of regional security and stability, the peaceful resolution of disputes, spreading economic welfare and consolidating world peace.

(Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Saudi Arabia)

Perhaps one of the most prominent indications that this new international order has indeed emerged is the unprecedented, firm stand taken by the international community towards the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq. When we met here a year ago the world was faced by a horrifying event and a grave tragedy, namely the occupation by a Member State of the Organization, Iraq, of another smaller Member, Kuwait, and the blatant attempt to destroy its sovereignty, identity and indeed its very existence as a nation. That was a horrifying event for everyone but for Arabs and Muslims it was especially painful. We felt overwhelming bitterness to know that the stab in our back did not come from an enemy we were warily watching, or from a malevolent envier harbouring hate towards our people. Rather, it came from a brother to whom we had offered our unlimited support and granted our unconditional trust, a brother we had stood by in time of hardship and towards whom we offered human and material sacrifices.

However, injustice cannot last nor aggression persist. The ordeal has revealed the true and noble metal of our people in the entire Gulf region who stood in unity by their rightful and legitimate leadership under the banner of right and rallied to rescue the victim. It was a cause for pride to have our Arab and Muslim brethren and other friendly nations from across the globe standing by us and fighting on the battlefields of honour in support of justice and legality.

(Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Saudi Arabia)

The world community did not disappoint us. The international community took a firm and courageous decision immediately to stand up in the face of aggression. This position was reflected in subsequent United Nations resolutions through a unique show of international consensus, which indicates that we are truly on the threshold of a new era in international relations. In this era there is no place for tyrants who suppress the will of the people or invaders who destroy other nations. We have seen the fullest expression of this will when the whole world, State after State, refused to recognize a de facto situation imposed by force and aggression.

I should like, on behalf of the custodian of the two Holy Mosques, King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz, to thank all the countries, peoples and organizations who stood against injustice and supported the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in its defence of its security and territorial integrity, whether by material participation in repelling the Iraqi aggression or through support in the international forums.

It is necessary to recall these events in order to diagnose the ills which have befallen us so that we might deal with the results of the tragedy. The conclusion which must be drawn from this tragedy is that no benefit will accrue from aggression and that the aggressor shall be made to bear the consequences of his actions. Furthermore, we must establish such measures as would prevent the recurrence of such a tragedy.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has supported all Security Council resolutions pertaining to the invasion of the State of Kuwait by Iraq and has supported and continues to support all international measures aiming at the enforcement of these resolutions.

(Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Saudi Arabia)

We are totally convinced that the prevention of the recurrence of such an aggression is not possible without the continued observance of the dictates of international legality and the full implementation of all the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. Therefore, we call upon the international community to maintain its adherence to those resolutions and insist on their full and speedy implementation.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia follows with great sorrow and grave concern the suffering of the people of Iraq, which is an inevitable consequence of the oppressive policies pursued by the Iraqi regime. We are totally convinced that the human ordeal of the people of Iraq is receiving the appropriate attention of the United Nations, and especially of the Committee which was established by the Security Council to deal with the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people.

The full compliance by Iraq with all the Security Council resolutions and its cooperation with the Special Committee will ensure that such humanitarian needs will be taken care of and, at the same time, contribute to fostering the principles of peace and stability in the region.

The new international order undoubtedly has its implications for international and regional relations as manifested in various political, security and economic fields.

Our experience in the Gulf area proved that the threat to our security has, in fact, emanated from within the region itself. The region had witnessed a devastating war between Iraq and Iran before it was again tormented by the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq. It has become clear that enduring stability in the Gulf region requires that the relations between the

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countries of the Gulf be based on solid and firm foundations and on the principles of international law. They must be characterized by equality among nations and mutual commitment to peaceful resolution of disputes through dialogue and non-interference in the internal affairs of each other. This should be accomplished on the basis of mutual respect and common interest.

It was, therefore, only natural that our experience should affect the way matters have evolved in the region and serve as a catalyst for a promising future vision for us. It is no longer acceptable to allow the security of our region to remain subject to the whims of those who have expansionist and subversive hegemonistic ambitions or the gamblers who are ready to risk away not only the interests of their own people but also those of the whole region and the world at large.

The leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council have given much attention and careful consideration to the future security arrangements of their region based on self-reliance and cooperation with brotherly and friendly countries in matters that serve the security and stability objectives.

The Arab order has suffered a terrifying blow during the crisis of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. The overhaul of this order has become a necessity if it is to be able to prevent a recurrence of similar tragic events. It is in this context that the Arab countries that supported our international legality sought to establish a new Arab order which should be based on the spirit of brotherhood, solidarity and mutual interest. These concepts have been incorporated in the Damascus Declaration, which was adopted by the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Syrian Arab Republic and the member States of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

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The Damascus Declaration is based on the principles of international law for the purpose of establishing friendly relations and peaceful coexistence, on the one hand, and bringing into reality the mutual desire to build real and serious cooperation and solidarity in political, economic, security and cultural fields, on the other. This effort was not an axis aimed against anyone. Rather, it represents a sincere call to reform the Arab order in accordance with these concepts within the framework of the Arab League.

Our Arab region cannot alone remain unaffected by these new and fast-moving currents which are changing the patterns of relations between nations and peoples. While stressing, especially in the wake of the tragedy which has befallen the Arab world, that it is unreasonable or unacceptable to base our decisions and actions on measures and standards other than those adopted by the world community, we therefore urge that all the issues of our region, especially the Palestinian question, which is the pivotal issue of the region, should benefit from these positive developments which are taking place in the international arena.

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Today, there exists an historic opportunity for the launching of a peace process aimed at ending the Arab-Israeli conflict and achieving a just and comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian question - a solution that conforms with United Nations resolutions and restores and consecrates the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people; a solution that institutes permanent principles for security and stability in the Middle East based on international legality and on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

There now exists a mechanism for achieving these goals - a peace conference, which is expected to be held in the near future. Within this framework, the Government of the custodian of the two holy mosques offers its full support for the efforts of President George Bush of the United States of America - brought to fruition by Secretary of State James Baker - to have an international conference convened with a view to achieving durable and equitable peace in the Middle East and resolving the Palestinian question. It fully supports the convening of the peace conference with the aim of achieving these objectives. It also affirms that the building of Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories, including East Al-Quds and the Golan Heights, is a serious violation of international law and of United Nations resolutions, and is also a major obstacle to the efforts and attempts that are being made to achieve peace in the Middle East.

It is indeed our hope that the will for peace will prevail and that the international community will apply to the Palestinian question the same principles as it applied to the Gulf crisis that arose when Iraq invaded Kuwait, so that international legality may be firmly established, and the

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principles of justice, freedom and the right of peoples to self-determination strongly upheld. The Arabs have chosen the road to peace. Within this framework, we welcome the declaration issued by the Palestinian National Council in its last session, which confirms this orientation towards peace. Today we are at an historic crossroads. It is only natural that we should choose the path of peace, for we are a nation urged by its religion to call for, and to heed the call for, peace, in total compliance with the order of God Almighty: "Should they lean toward peace then you must lean toward it, and you must trust in God."

As we see successive indications that the new international order is indeed emerging, we follow with great interest and admiration the achievements of the Government of Lebanon. We support the successful steps taken by that Government to implement the provisions of the national reconciliation agreement concluded in the Taif conference, especially those pertaining to its role, through its own forces, in reinstituting the authority of the State of Lebanon over the entire Lebanese territory.

We also followed with great interest the speech of Mr. Elias Hraoui, President of the Republic of Lebanon, in which he called upon the international community to ensure the full implementation of Security Council resolution 425 (1978) and in which he stressed his Government's determination to face up to the considerable challenges involved in restoring matters to their normal course. The Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia joins the President of Lebanon in urging the international community to contribute in a positive manner to Lebanon's reconstruction efforts through the international fund for the assistance of Lebanon. We are pleased that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will host the inaugural meeting of this fund in the near future, and we

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welcome the participation in, and the contributions to, the reconstruction of Lebanon by all organizations as well as sisterly countries and industrialized nations.

Since the beginning of the distressing events in Somalia the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, acting on its historic Islamic and national sense of responsibility and out of its commitment to the territorial integrity of that sister country, took the initiative of urging all parties there to come to the negotiating table and to solve their problems in a way that would preserve the unity, security and stability of Somalia, so that the country might resume its role in support of Islamic and Arab solidarity.

There is cause for optimism that this crisis will be overcome. I refer to the progress made at the meetings of the reconciliation conference that was convened under the auspices of Hassan Goulide Aptidon, President of the Republic of Djibouti. The conference continued its deliberations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia under the auspices of the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd bin Abdulaziz, resulted in a cease-fire agreement, and secured the commitment of all parties to the search for reconciliation and national unity. We are indeed hopeful that this will lead to full reconciliation and will eliminate all obstacles and overcome other difficulties in its path, for security and stability should return to the land of this sister country.

The struggle of the Afghani people to preserve their beliefs, independence and sovereignty requires the attention of all of us. The Government of Saudi Arabia has constantly supported the struggle of the Afghani people, who deserve to enjoy stability under a Government of their own

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choosing - one that realizes their aspirations for the preservation of sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Government of the custodian of the two holy mosques hopes for a peaceful solution that satisfies these aspirations. We have previously commended the Afghan Mujahidin for their support for the Secretary-General's report. We wish to take this opportunity to express our satisfaction at the joint decision of the Governments of the United States of America and of the Soviet Union to stop arms supplies to Afghanistan, and at their desire to achieve a final solution to the Afghan problem that will guarantee the return of peace to that long-suffering country, whose people have made enormous sacrifices. We also fully appreciate the commendable efforts being made in this regard by the Secretary-General. The custodian of the two holy mosques underscored the support of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for these efforts when he met the Secretary-General recently.

The African continent has recently witnessed successive victories scored by the people of South Africa. A new era, in which the racial discrimination laws will certainly be dismantled, is being ushered in. At this point, we cannot but express our appreciation to, and our admiration of, the people of South Africa. We look forward to the day when the policy of apartheid and discrimination in South Africa will be fully abolished.

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The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has supported and continues to support the efforts to control and limit the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in any place on earth. We must note with satisfaction the important and successful steps recently taken by the Governments of the United States of America and the Soviet Union which culminated in the conclusion of an historic Treaty limiting strategic nuclear weapons. We commend, too, the courageous initiative revealed a few days ago by President George Bush which calls for deep cuts in the various types of nuclear weapons and which proposes further reductions in the most dangerous of those weapons.

In compliance with its policy of pursuing all peace efforts, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has become a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and abided by its provisions. It has also declared in various international forums its support for the efforts to ban all chemical and biological weapons.

The Government of the custodian of the two holy mosques strongly believes that the Middle East region - which has suffered a number of wars and armed conflicts and become a stockpiling and production area for a variety of weapons of mass destruction - is indeed the region which most needs to be free of such weapons. The Government of the custodian of the two holy mosques has expressed its support for all initiatives aimed at limiting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East region.

Today, with a new international order in the making, we are hopeful that the international economic issues will receive the attention they deserve from the international community. We are quite convinced that peace and security in the world cannot be achieved - or indeed endure - unless based on principles of equality, cooperation and justice. Therefore, facing up to the

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economic problems at this important juncture in international relations and under the new international climate, will require efforts to advance the cooperation between developing and developed countries based on the fact that security and economic development are but two sides of one coin. Indeed, no economic development is possible without security, nor is security or stability achievable in the absence of economic development.

For this reason, it has become necessary for the developed nations to fulfil their promises to raise their contributions of official development assistance to reach the objectives of the International Development Strategy adopted by the United Nations. They should also work to increase the efficiency of the international monetary system, stimulate the flow of international trade by improving the conditions of market accessibility for developing nations exports to reach their markets, and set fair and equitable prices commensurate with those charged for their imports from the developed countries. It is also hoped that they will contribute to the efforts aimed at encouraging the transfer of technology suited to the needs and conditions of the developing nations.

Believing in the close relationship and interdependency between security and development, and as a way of contributing to the establishment of solid stability and progress in the world, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its sister States, members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, took the initiative to announce the establishment of the Gulf programme for assisting developmental efforts in the Arab world. And as a recognition of the fact that funding of development efforts is indeed an international and collective responsibility, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia calls on the industrial nations to join this programme, support its objectives and facilitate the achievement of its lofty objectives.

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The new international order, which is at its inception, is an order where hopes are high and challenges great. Yet, we all have a grave responsibility towards our future generations, to construct it in such a way as to save these future generations from the dangers of repeating the mistakes of the past. We should create together future horizons where peace, security, mutual trust and understanding may loom large and where our future generations may enjoy stability and prosperity.

"Say, work. For God will see your work, and so will His apostle and the believers."

Mr. MANGLAPUS (Philippines): We meet today as we end a year that began with a crisis. The United Nations confronted that crisis and resolved it. Standing tall in the midst of that crisis, threatened but undaunted, welcoming assistance but marching out first, in the vanguard of its own defence and the redemption of its neighbours, was a proud nation called Saudi Arabia. It is fitting that the Assembly should now be presided over by a man from that nation, with an outstanding record of leadership in diplomatic engagements for his country, for his race, for his region and for the world. With Mr. Samir S. Shihabi as our President, we face a historic and most productive session.

We had one such session last year, when Mr. Guido de Marco of the Republic of Malta presided over the Assembly and led us to significant, indelible accomplishments towards the restructuring and reform of the United Nations. We congratulate Mr. de Marco as he yields the presidency to Mr. Shihabi.

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I am here to speak for my country, but permit me to note that while I speak for no other country I do stand here proud of our membership in, and this year of our being Chairman of, the Standing Committee of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), to which the Philippines is bound in ever-developing solidarity with Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.*

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* Mr. Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (Malaysia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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The history of the Organization has been marked with celebrations. We are, for instance, at the moment in the middle of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, the International Decade for Eradication of Colonialism, and also the World Decade for Cultural Development. We have already celebrated international years for the women and the children of the world. Since 1973 there have been on record 21 such United Nations salutes. These celebrations establish the character of the United Nations - and sculpt the milestones of the performance of humankind in this demi-century.

I submit that our Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, from 1973 to 1983, furnished ideological fuel for the popular movement in South Africa that extracted this year an official decision, though not yet adequately implemented, to dismantle apartheid. We solemnly marked the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in that year of 1988 during which there began the process for the final solution of the Cambodian crisis. That historic congruence in time, I submit, reminded the negotiators that the process, if it was to be successful, could only culminate in the universal human right of free democratic elections. That right, happily for history, is about to be implemented in Cambodia. We must felicitate the South Africans and the Cambodians on these two human triumphs which are part of an ennobling, victorious, current human momentum that we have so far failed to celebrate. It is the mounting momentum of the people and it has been in progress for a quarter of a century. People have been crushed before, and their momentum has been many times aborted. But "there is no substitute for the people", as Alexander Dubcek told me in Prague last year. The people and time are unconquerable allies.

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So it began, predictably enough, in Greece, where in four days of November 1973 the people, initially quelled by the army, succeeded in replacing dictatorship with democracy. The power of the people swept southern Europe, leaped to Latin America, Asia, eastern Europe and now southern Africa. Not only heroic individuals but people, masses of people, are changing the face of the Earth. The Philippines could claim a modest share in the propulsion of this momentum of the people. A New York Times editorial has characterized scenes of Muscovites during the recent coup as "reminiscent of Manila's people-power revolt".

The power of the people is enshrined in the Philippine 1987 Constitution not only in general preambular terms but in operative provisions that have made us a direct, as well as a representative, democracy. One of the drafters of that document put it this way:

> "The fact that the people elect representatives is not an act of complete trust in those representatives; the people retain the right to review their decisions."

Our direct democracy is not only on the village level: it is national. "Direct democracy", says one of our Senators, "is superior to representative democracy." At this very moment the people of the Philippines are gathering signatures for a national referendum on the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Security which we have signed with the United States of America and which has been rejected by the Philippine Senate. In our direct democracy, we respect our Senate but we also respect our people. Senatus Populusque Romanus: the Senate and the people must rule together.

Is there a relevance in this to the mission of the United Nations? Ours has become a unipolar world. There are misgivings about this new global

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condition. It is asked, now that the bipolar balance is gone: what is to restrain the solitary super-Power from overstating its duties as keeper of the new world order? The ultimate restraint on that super-Power is its very system, in which the people are supreme.

It was the people in America that pulled this country from a war in South-East Asia which they perceived to be irrelevant. It was the same people that cheered America to a precision victory in a Gulf war that they acclaimed as inevitable. It is the same people that are keeping America sober in its triumphal hour. Indeed, constitutional democracy is not a synonym for peace, nor is it a hard-bound warranty against international violence. But where can we find a more productive forum for peace? Where can we find a more fertile context for transparency and restraint?

Today the once theoretical paper dreams of constitutional accessibility and openness have become hard reality. Democratic constitutions have found a new ally: technology. The same laboratories that are enhancing the science of discriminate demolition have already made it possible for humankind to be the instant witness to tragedies of all kinds and in all places. Those scenes can horrify people into demanding openness from their leaders, but the people must be free to make the demands. Electronic transparency could lead to moral, official and diplomatic transparency, and that process could mobilize the restraining forces in society.

We must agree with another recent remarkable editorial of The New York Times which warns that outsiders should not redesign the internal politics of nations. But it adds that there is "every reason to proclaim and promote democratic values". The counsel was directed to America. But shall we leave it to America alone to shepherd the values of the world? Can we not find

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other proclaimers and promoters of democratic values? How about the United Nations?

It is wrong to say that the United Nations is only the theatre of States, the agora of international ideas, the conciliator of multilateral contradictions; for it is more than those categories, however unique, historic and invaluable they may be. The United Nations, I submit, is above all, indeed, a proclaimer and promoter of values; and - let us not evade the words at this juncture - the United Nations is a proclaimer and promoter of democratic values.

What else is General Assembly resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948, what else is this Universal Declaration of Human Rights, what else is this ringing document, but the inventory of constitutional democracy? It is all there: the right to life, liberty, speech, property, movement, assembly, social services, non-discrimination, participation, down to the specific of "periodic and genuine elections", all essential and standard items in national bills of rights. The General Assembly "proclaims" these rights as "a common standard for all peoples and all nations" and enjoins "every individual and every organ of society" to "promote" them.

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The United Nations proclaims and promotes democracy and along with it, transparency and restraint. Article 19 gives "everyone" the right "to seek, receive and impart information" and Article 21 identifies the basis of government authority - the "will of the people", which is also the ultimate restrainer of official abuse.

Thirteen years before the Declaration of Human Rights, there was already an auspicious portent for it in the Charter that gave life to the United Nations in 1945. The Charter opened its preamble with a reaffirmation of "faith in fundamental human rights" and, at the first opportunity, in Article 73 b, in dealing with States in gestation, enjoined the United Nations to develop "free political institutions" in the lands under its trust.

Indeed, in trust territories there is always the happy, challenging prospect of fresh beginnings. But so are these post-cold-war times a challenge to fresh beginnings.

Many factors spelled the end of the cold war. But we would be mocking history if we did not recognize that the final verdict that tumbled the walls was rendered by a world of peoples - peoples wishing to end the shackling of their minds, their souls, their political institutions and their economies. The cooling winds of liberalization blew themselves into a gale of democracy which even now is still huffing and puffing at the residual ramparts of involuntary servitude.

If the United Nations intends to design a global strategy for peace that will not only dwell on the surface of the issue - or even just below it - but will strike at its roots, it must return to its own roots, recall its resonant declarations and resensitize itself to its commitment to the rights of human beings.

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Nations are the vital constituents of this Organization and, of course, the Organization must never violate the sovereignty of those nations. But I have shown, I hope, that these very nations, united, have not abdicated, but refurbished their own sovereignty by urging themselves and "all peoples ... every individual and every organ of society" (resolution 217 A (III), seventh preambular paragraph) to promote those values that are nothing if not the very stuff of constitutional democracy.

Let the United Nations leadership ensure that every assembly in the United Nations, every council, every court, every organ, shall re-immerse itself in this original mission.

There is a responsive, eager world awaiting this leadership. Large land masses have opened themselves to the world - in Eastern Europe, in Africa, in Asia. Our great neighbour, the People's Republic of China, has declared its determination "to implement the policies of reform and opening to the outside world". And this very United Nations has stretched its arms open in welcome to even more of the gallant peoples of the world.

The Philippines extends a special welcome to our Pacific neighbours to the East - the Republic of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

We salute also our two neighbours to the North - the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea - whose brotherly simultaneous ingress into our company may soon produce the resurrected unity of a single great nation.

We salute those three brave nations of the Baltic Sea - Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia - who are back at last in their rightful place in the community of nations.

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And one last salute to Prince Norodom Sihanouk, that great Asian - noble by blood and by principle - who now leads the Cambodian delegation to this assembly of nations.

All of these are triumphs of the people. Since 1973 the people of the world have been speaking and they have been winning. In the last two years the General Assembly has passed resolutions on human development proclaiming that human beings are the goal - not simply the means - of development.

Gross national product statistics are meaningless if they answer only the questions of how well-fed, how well-housed, how well-clothed the people are. The statistics of our computerized bureaus must also respond to the demanding enquiry: how free are these people?

The record of the United Nations must contain in detail the ongoing story of the ascent to dignity and freedom of humanity en masse.

Let the nations of the world applaud the people of the world. For this, indeed, is the quarter century of the people.

Mr. GROS ESPIELL (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): The events of recent years, and particularly events since the last session of the General Assembly, have categorically disproved the assertions of certain modern prophets who stated that we have reached the end of history. On the contrary, history continues to move forward, always with openness and constant renewal. Today's realities are the greatest proof of the irrepressible impetus of freedom and of the fact that men and peoples always succeed in breaking the chains of oppression.

The world is now crossing the threshold of a new era which is marked by an expanding democracy in the framework of an open, changing and endless process. The century which is coming to an end will be known as the century

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of renewal and the reconquest of democracy. The fight for the ideals of democracy continues to be the great driving force of history. The two world wars which radically transformed political forms and international structures which exist today were essentially, though not solely, confrontations between democracy and the forces of totalitarianism.

We are now witnessing events which may well lead to a new international order - an order related to the triumph of democracy. We may still not be able to talk about that new order, except in so far as it represents a verification of existing realities. If whatever lies ahead is to be a real order and not simply a manifestation of power, it will have to be characterized by scrupulous respect for the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter. There is no order outside the law and, at the same time, law is essential to preserve peace. These essential concepts of legal philosophy cannot be forgotten as we reflect on the present international situation.

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

The end of the cold war, the growing understanding among the great Powers, the political changes in Eastern Europe, the end of communism as a doctrine and its universal collapse as a political system, the consolidation of democracy in practically all of Latin America, the virtual end of the decolonization process and the irreversible movement towards the elimination of apartheid - these are events heralding the possible birth of the new international order that we all desire, which will have to take root and be further developed over the next few decades.

The bipolar concept of the world is no longer valid as a basis for interpreting international political realities. The new international situation is being shaped through changes and events occurring with the kind of unpredictability that is characteristic of critical moments in human history and with the speed that is typical of the accelerating pace of history in our times.

However, that process, which has positive elements, also has elements that could negatively affect the international balance, peace and security. Therefore, we see a strange juxtaposition of promise and danger, light and darkness.

Mankind must be given firm prospects of living in peace and prosperity. The present generation has the historic responsibility of laying down the ethical, legal and political foundations for the future. The first step is fully to recognize that responsibility.

When we think about building a new international order we cannot think merely about new forms of the status quo or of a new distribution of power in the world. What we want is to ensure free coexistence among States on the basis of full observance of the principles of the Charter by all members of the international community.

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

The ban on the use of force, which entails respect for the key principle of non-intervention, will have to be regularly strengthened, as the cornerstone of international peace.

The peaceful settlement of disputes between States is a rule that must always be followed, it being understood that solving or containing conflicts requires proper coordination of the actions of the United Nations and of regional bodies.

The principle of good faith in the fulfilment of international obligations must be not only an ethical precept and a legal commitment, but also an element of wisdom in the conduct of international relations.

We must jointly undertake to bring about the necessary universal respect for the principle of the self-determination of peoples, in harmony with other principles of international law, in such a way that it does not become an excuse for ethnic confrontation and divisive xenophobia. But the international community cannot remain aloof if nothing succeeds in preventing confrontation between peoples who do not wish to live under a common State system and if hatred, violence and fighting become the main features of their relations. The international community must face up to such a situation and, in order to prevent its becoming a threat to international peace and security, take action to guarantee peaceful exercise of the right to self-determination.

With regard to the right to self-determination, I wish to express Uruguay's support for the peace plan for Western Sahara and to express our earnest hope that the referendum will take place and that its results will be accepted.

The heart-rending experience of the years preceding the Gulf crisis is clear proof that States must conduct themselves strictly in accord with the obligations deriving from the purposes and principles of the Charter.

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

The new international situation offers possibility of progress in international relations. I wish to address three issues of the greatest importance.

The first is the strengthening of the collective security system. The end of the cold war does not necessarily imply the end of real possibilities of armed conflict. Though the danger of a global conflagration has diminished, there remain situations threatening peace and security.

The collective security system established by the Charter was not applied for more than 45 years, despite the fact that it was conceived as a key element in the organization of the post-war world. It seems that only now are the assumptions on which the system of collective security was based becoming reality. The system assumes a political understanding between the permanent members of the Security Council. The absence of such an understanding paralysed the United Nations and made it impossible for the system to work.

Experience in the Gulf crisis obliges us to maximize our efforts to ensure that the system operates with full respect for the Charter. The system must be organized in such a way that the competent organs of the Organization have effective control.

In this context, we cannot fail to refer to recent events in the Soviet Union. The interruption of the democratic process in the system there by the attempted unconstitutional coup d'état would have had negative consequences internationally. The re-establishment of constitutional legality and the re-establishment of that process, which my country hails as the fruit of the people's courage and resolve, is at the root of the Soviet Union's contribution to peace and to the development of the collective security system.

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Uruguay supported the vigorous actions taken by the Security Council, beginning in August 1990, when it decided to take collective measures against Iraq's aggression, with a view to restoring rights that had been breached and re-establishing international peace and security.

That support was given unhesitatingly, despite the material sacrifices it entailed for our economy, and it continues today, with Uruguay's decision to second members of its military forces to serve in the peace-keeping operations in the region. Uruguay, which sustained economic damage as a result of the measures taken, invoked Article 50 of the Charter to request the compensatory assistance to which it had, and has, a right. The implementation of Article 50 is essential for the future of collective security. It is necessary to adopt agreements regulating the obligation to grant assistance to third-party States that are affected.

Today, after our experience, we have come to the General Assembly with the feeling that we have an exceptional opportunity to make the collective security system work, in accordance with the Charter. If there is one thing that makes this moment stand out in history, it is that this belief is universal, which compels us to think together and openly about the future use of the powers conferred on the Security Council in Chapter VII of the Charter.

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

Proportionality in the lawful use of force on the basis of Security Council decisions and strict application of international humanitarian law are examples of situations in which it is essential to avoid overstepping the limits of the measures provided in Chapter VII.

Future world stability and its peace and security do not necessarily depend upon the proper functioning of the mechanisms for dealing with extreme circumstances, which inevitably require recourse to collective measures. Hence, there is need for multilateral preventive diplomacy, particularly on the part of the Secretary-General, which will enable the United Nations to supervise and contain situations of potential conflict.

Regional conflicts, some of which are extremely serious, deserve special attention. Uruguay wishes to refer specifically to one of them, namely, that in the Middle East. It is necessary, through the holding of a peace conference, to move forward towards the establishment of peace and security in that critical region, ensuring the right of its peoples to live and organize themselves according to their own free will and the right of all States to exist and live side by side in an environment based on law, justice and cooperation.

The second key issue is the development of international law. During the United Nations Decade of International Law, it is appropriate to recall that the fundamental obligation of every State, and the only one that can ensure peaceful coexistence, is submission to the rule of law. We must avail ourselves of the new international situation to encourage the development of international law in every field. Disarmament law will benefit particularly from this favourable situation. Uruguay is hopeful that the new political climate will lead to general acceptance of existing treaties on arms control

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and arms reduction as well as to the adoption of and, more important, compliance in good faith with new treaties that will represent progress in this field.

The concentration of weaponry far beyond defence needs at both the world and regional levels contributes to an increase in mutual distrust. Measures related to disarmament, on the other hand, represent a contribution to pacification, reducing tensions and generating a climate of security.

Last year significant progress was achieved in the limitation of strategic weapons as a result of agreements reached between the United States and the Soviet Union. A few days ago President Bush announced the unilateral destruction of all tactical nuclear weapons and made an offer of negotiations with the Soviet Union for the continued reduction of intercontinental strategic weapons. This process of reduction and limitation of tactical and strategic nuclear weapons, which is obviously of interest and concern to the whole of the international community, must continue.

Latin America has taken decisions aimed at consolidating the process of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region. On 18 July of this year Argentina and Brazil signed a bilateral agreement in Guadalajara to use nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes. For the fulfilment of that agreement both countries anticipate the application of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. They also reaffirmed their will to adopt measures to bring the Treaty of Tlatelolco into force. Uruguay applauds and supports that attitude.

We must also move forward resolutely in the field of the destruction of chemical, biological and other weapons of mass destruction. The Mendoza Declaration issued by Argentina, Brazil and Chile on 4 September 1991, to which Uruguay has also adhered, is of major importance.

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

The development of international law in accordance with present-day reality and the new order we want to establish covers many areas other than disarmament. The environment, drug trafficking, terrorism and international trade are some of the priorities. The development calls for a strengthening of the main legal organ of the United Nations, namely, the International Court of Justice. Among the many measures that might be undertaken in that regard, I would emphasize the importance of making greater use of the Court as a consultative body. That could be achieved if the General Assembly granted the Secretary-General the authority to request such opinions.

We turn now to the third key issue: international cooperation for development. The international economic scene, with its unequal and unfair distribution of wealth and opportunities, has shown itself impervious to the dynamics of change that have shaken the political order. International peace and security will never be assured as long as economic insecurity persists. Peace is not merely the absence of war. In a small and interdependent world the coexistence of two opposite worlds, that of abundance and waste on the one hand, and that of poverty and hunger on the other, will inevitably generate violence.

Growing wealth and growing poverty are the paradox of today's world. Poverty weakens the cohesiveness of societies; it destroys the foundation of human rights and perverts the environment. Hence the importance of social issues in development. It is necessary, therefore, to begin to prepare for the social summit that will be held within the next few years.

The absence of scientific and technological progress is one of the reasons for the widening of the gulf that separates the developed and the developing worlds. Technological progress is a key factor in the solution of

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North-South tensions and would be of benefit for the developed and industrialized countries. That is why Uruguay proposed the creation of a common market of knowledge, a project that is already under way at the regional level in the framework of the Organization of American States. It should also be considered at the universal level.

The necessarily universal character of the United Nations means that all States of the world should be Members of the Organization. The admission of both Koreas not only reaffirms that trend but reveals the possibilities that exist for solving a problem that constituted one negative aspect of international relations. Uruguay hopes that this dual admission will stand as a symbol of the will to strengthen the universality of the United Nations as an indispensable element in ensuring peace and security on a global level.

The admission of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, heartily supported by Uruguay, is the expression of the international recognition of the correct example of the right to self-determination and the ratification by history of the fact that the secret protocols of 1939 and the annexation of those Republics by force are null and void.

The entry of the Marshall Islands and Micronesia into the United Nations is a historic event that exemplifies the present stage of the historic process of decolonization undertaken by the United Nations.

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The fundamental importance of the environment issue at a time when the Conference on Environment and Development scheduled for Rio de Janeiro in 1992 is being prepared compels us to specify Uruguay's position on the matter.

The question of the preservation of the environment and its relationship with development is a global issue which must be faced in all its aspects - ethical, cultural, political, economic, social, technical and legal. The issue is global not only in itself, but also because of the need to face up to it with universal measures which go beyond national or sectoral outlooks.

The progress of developing countries and the preservation of the environment are intimately and necessarily related issues. It would therefore be a mistake to try to solve the environmental crisis without paying due attention to economic and social problems, and the Rio Conference must reflect this relationship.

Uruguay joined the countries of the area in preparing the Tlatelolco platform - adopted last March - and the Guadalajara declaration, adopted by the Heads of State and Government of Ibero-America, Spain and Portugal; these are statements of positions, both political and technical, for the negotiations which will culminate in 1992. We are now at a critical stage, only 10 months aways from Rio 1992. Uruguay believes that it is vital to prevent Rio from becoming just another Stockholm.

The general principles that will apply to environmental protection must be set out in the form of a convention. Apart from the conventions now being prepared we must have another, and not just a simple statement, which spells out the fundamental principles and criteria in this matter. The convention must set out criteria for setting up a legal system to resolve environmental

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disputes and judge offences or crimes by means of a specialized judicial body or chamber. The bases on which responsibility for violating the duties inherent in environmental protection is to be implemented and the ways in which this may be done must be set out. Polluting emissions come mainly from developed countries, and they must bear the main responsibility for them. This responsibility may be common or shared, but we must not forget the consequences which a policy of uncontrolled industrialization - which was totally foreign to the developing world - has had, and for which the developing world cannot be held solely responsible. This implies that there must inevitably be a process of codification of international environmental law. The future charter of the Earth, to be adopted at the Rio Conference, must be a mandatory, legally binding document, with the goal of creating the necessary conditions for sustainable development and ensuring the right of future generations to life and well-being.

Drug trafficking and terrorism, which are being shown to be closely linked, are continuing to exact a tragic toll in destruction and death, violating fundamental human rights and debasing the basic principles of civilized coexistence. To combat these two scourges effectively, every means international cooperation can provide must be used. Alongside the concern generated by the alarming expansion of the illicit use of drugs and the power of the drug dealers, it is encouraging to see how, through international cooperation, effective measures are being taken on the basis of shared responsibility between consuming and producing countries.

Five years have passed since the launching of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in Punta del Este, aimed at ending the waves of protectionism which are chipping away at trade. Last

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December, we believed we were at the end of the road towards an equitable agreement which would satisfy the legitimate aspirations of over 100 participating countries. Unfortunately, the meeting in Brussels, which I presided over as Chairman of the trade negotiating committee at the ministerial level, was a failure because it was not possible to conclude the Round. Fundamental differences on vital issues arose and, when the session was adjourned, the Director-General of GATT was entrusted with the task of carrying out consultations aimed at restarting negotiations as soon as possible.

The first half of 1991 has been devoted to getting the negotiations back on track. When the trade negotiating committee met, at the end of July, there was a renewed will to continue working from September on, with a view to finishing work by the end of this year. In this context, the commitment by the Heads of State or Government of the Seven at their London summit was very encouraging.

The Cairns group, of which Uruguay is a member, has already stated that the Round will not end successfully if a satisfactory solution concerning the liberalization of agricultural trade is not reached.

We are starting resolutely upon the last leg of the most important trade negotiations ever undertaken. We shall support anything that contributes to success. The Round must end in December with a positive outcome, with reasonable, globally balanced achievements. If it fails, we shall have to admit our shameful inability to achieve, in today's world, formulas that encourage free and non-discriminatory international trade, that banish protectionism and that become factors for vigorous development.

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Respect for and promotion of human rights is the basis for peace. So long as there is any place in the world where the dignity of human beings is not respected, so long as persecution and discrimination persist, so long as political rights are not recognized and guaranteed and so long as periodic, free elections are not held, the advancement of mankind will be impossible and the degree of economic, social and cultural development of individuals will be uneven. Human rights must be protected without discrimination, free of any element of political selectivity and on the basis of the strict application of international law.

We must banish from the United Nations all inaccurate descriptions based on hatred, such as the one which in 1975 mistakenly equated Zionism with racism, in General Assembly resolution 3379 (XXX). Uruguay, which has always been against this infamous resolution and voted against its adoption, is now in favour of its repeal. The mistake of 1975 must be emended. By so doing, we shall pay a tribute to the truth, rectify an unfair and offensive judgement and contribute to the peace process in the Middle East.

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International democratization has been translated into a global improvement of the world human rights situation. But the general picture is far from satisfactory. We are still faced with some atrocious realities. Very serious violations persist and armed conflicts, both domestic and international, continue to be a source of attacks on human rights and international humanitarian law.

The human rights situation must remain a priority issue for the United Nations. The principle of non-intervention cannot be a protective shield behind which human rights can be violated. But stating that plain truth does not mean repudiating the principle of non-intervention nor does it imply accepting a right of intervention based on a political and self-interested assessment by one or several States. This must not be confused with the collective duty, decided upon by legal means, to provide help and relief when serious emergencies arise in the field of human rights.

Uruguay is particularly interested in the World Conference on Human Rights scheduled for 1993, which must make a major contribution to the full, general and universal application of human rights.

Two recent events in Central America deserve to be highlighted. Uruguay hails the agreements between Guatemala and Belize, as well as the agreement which paves the way towards peace in El Salvador, as truly major achievements.

In conclusion, I should like to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for the work he has done. His activities over the last year, brilliantly described in his report to the General Assembly, have made an exceptional contribution to peace, security and the future of the United Nations. He has earned the thanks of the international community.

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Last year the General Assembly had a productive session under the expert presidency of Foreign Minister Guido de Marco, whom I am pleased to congratulate on his work. This year we have momentous decisions to take at a difficult time, when we are faced with challenges requiring immediate solutions. The election of Ambassador Shihabi, with the experience he has gained as the representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations, to guide our debates allows us to forecast another successful session. I am convinced that his skills and knowledge of international affairs, along with his keen sense of justice, will enable him to lead our work to a successful conclusion.

Mr. WONG (Singapore): I should like to congratulate Ambassador Shihabi on his election to the most honoured position in our General Assembly - the presidency. At a crucial moment in our Organization's history, his election reflects the confidence that Member States have in his ability to lead us wisely and effectively in a session faced with many perplexing choices and difficulties.

It is my pleasure to take this opportunity to welcome the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea into the family of the United Nations. The membership of the two Koreas in the United Nations does not preclude their efforts for peaceful reunification. Indeed, we hope that the entry of the two Koreas into the United Nations will herald a further easing of tensions on the Korean peninsula.

I am also pleased to welcome the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands as United Nations Members. As an island country, Singapore is happy to see more island countries becoming Members of the United Nations. I also welcome the entry into the United Nations of the three Baltic States - Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia - whose independence and

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sovereignty have now been recognized by the Soviet Union and many members of the international community, including Singapore.

This forty-sixth session of the General Assembly is being held at a time of renewed faith in the United Nations and its role in the world. Freed from the constraints of the cold war, the United Nations responded with unprecedented speed to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The action in the Gulf became possible because the permanent members of the Security Council cooperated in a matter of peace and security in the way originally foreseen when the United Nations was founded. This fundamental objective of the United Nations was realized through the sustained cooperation and increased commonality of interests of the major Powers. The role of the United Nations in the Gulf war has given new hope to the smaller countries of the world like Singapore. We now have more confidence that this is a world in which nations can be secure because of the capacity of the United Nations to guarantee their security through collective measures. This is an important element in a new world order.

The United Nations emerged from the Gulf crisis strengthened and revitalized. Simultaneously with the changes in the world political order, it is being gradually transformed. In such a period of unprecedented changes in the world, the United Nations is well poised to play an increasingly significant role. Already, it can be congratulated on its role in resolving some long-standing regional conflicts, such as the Iran-Iraq War, the conflict concerning Namibia, and the civil wars in Angola and Cambodia.

As a South-East Asian country, Singapore is especially pleased to note the progress towards a comprehensive settlement in Cambodia. This was possible because of the outstanding support given by the international community since 1978; the perseverance of the two co-Chairmen of the Paris

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Conference on Cambodia - Indonesia and France; and the cooperation of the Permanent Five and regional and other States, as well as the United Nations Secretary-General and the Secretariat, including Mr. Rafeeudin Ahmed and his staff. Singapore would also like to express its appreciation to the President of the International Conference on Kampuchea, the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria, Mr. Alois Mock, and his distinguished predecessors. We also extend our thanks to the Ambassador of Senegal, Mrs. Absa Claude Diallo, and her predecessor for chairing the Ad Hoc Committee of the Conference.

But our particular appreciation and congratulations must be extended to His Royal Highness Prince Sihanouk and the leaders of the other factions, who, through a series of compromises and cooperation at a number of recent meetings, have made possible a settlement consistent with the Permanent Five framework of August 1990 which will bring peace and national reconciliation to Cambodia. We welcome the presence of the Supreme National Council delegation led by His Royal Highness Prince Sihanouk at this session of the General Assembly. Singapore will cooperate fully with the United Nations and the Supreme National Council to help ensure that the Cambodian people will be able to exercise in free and fair elections its right of self-determination and to live in peace and harmony in an independent Cambodia. Thus, all of us have helped finally to achieve what the Association of South-East Asian Nations has been seeking to accomplish in Cambodia over the past 13 years.

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We hope that the present atmosphere prevailing at the United Nations will also provide a window of opportunity to resolve the long-standing disputes and conflicts between the States and peoples of the Middle East. A durable and equitable peace settlement in the Middle East can only be built on the basis of compromise and reconciliation. We call on both sides to display flexibility and moderation for the sake of peace and the welfare of their peoples. In this context, we welcome and support the efforts to convene a Middle East peace conference based on United Nations resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Singapore has always recognized both the right of Israel to live peacefully within secure and recognized borders and the right of the Palestinian people to their own homeland in the occupied territories.

But even as we look to the future with hope, the current political upheaval in the Soviet Union, one of the permanent members of the Security Council, gives us cause for concern. It is difficult to predict how its internal and external policies are going to evolve. Whatever the outcome of the crisis, it seems clear that the Soviet Union will probably be preoccupied with its internal problems for some time to come.

With the end of the cold war and the end of the confrontation between competing ideological blocs, it would be timely for the international community to strengthen its system for peace and security. Whenever international law and the principles of the Charter are violated, resolute action must be taken by the United Nations. The collective action taken by the United Nations to reverse the occupation of Kuwait was a unique case because the violation of basic principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity was so flagrant. It will probably be far more difficult to organize

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resistance to less clear-cut challenges. The question before the international community is how to make the United Nations more effective in the post-cold-war world.

Singapore firmly believes that the United Nations must have improved capabilities for anticipating and preventing conflicts. The United Nations needs a better monitoring apparatus so that conflicts can be contained and resolved peacefully before hostilities begin. Also, while the Secretary-General is already authorized, under Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations, to bring to the attention of the Security Council "any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security", we agree with the view that the Secretary-General should be given a stronger position and the means to exercise authority. In addition, the possibility of strengthening the enforcement powers of the United Nations could be further explored.

The role of United Nations peace-keeping forces should also be expanded. They should not only deal with monitoring cease-fires and supervising the end of inter-State conflicts, but could also be used to ensure that conflicts are contained before they break out into open warfare. Singapore's support for United Nations peace-keeping operations has been demonstrated by the fact that we contributed military observers and police units to participate in United Nations peace-keeping missions in Namibia in 1989, at the Iraq-Kuwait border at the end of the Gulf War and in Angola earlier this year, and we will, we hope, do so in Western Sahara later this year.

We believe that a system of security must be built on principles of sovereignty and collective security, not on the military might of individual Powers, although the cold war has ended with some countries in a position of

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unparalleled political and economic influence. Collective security arrangements by the United Nations, as defined in Chapter VII of the Charter, are, according to sceptics, neither collective nor secure if arranged and dominated by the big Powers, as they will shape the agenda and frame the targets.

While being realistic about the leadership role of the big Powers, there is also a role for the smaller Member States. This would include input from the General Assembly on the implementation of United Nations collective-security procedures. In order to play this role responsibly, developing countries, which constitute a majority of General Assembly Members, should be rigorous in upholding standards of international conduct. They should be vigilant against transgressions of the principles of international law.

As we enter a new era of international relations, we feel that the United Nations itself needs to be improved to meet the challenges of the 1990s and beyond. It is time to capitalize on the new spirit of cooperation at the United Nations and re-examine old priorities, the proliferation of agencies and the need for greater coordination among them. The United Nations could be revitalized by streamlining its structure and procedures. In order to inspire confidence and build consensus and support from the majority, the process of United Nations reforms should be transparent and democratic.

In the last forty years, during the cold war and its prevailing East-West tensions, the most difficult and urgent task before the United Nations was the maintenance of international peace and security. While this is still the main objective of the United Nations, we believe that in a changed international

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environment, the United Nations can make itself the major forum for promoting global economic and social development through greater self-help and North-South cooperation.

The most formidable problem before the world community is the widening gulf between rich and poor countries. The peace of rich nations will not last long when the crisis of the global underclass assumes overwhelming proportions. There is no doubt that each country bears the main responsibility for its economic progress, but it is also the responsibility of both developed and developing countries to help poorer countries to help themselves. One means of such help is to provide technical assistance and manpower training in relevant fields of development. Very often it is the shortage of educated and trained manpower, together with rapid population expansion, which slows down economic growth and development in developing countries.

The developed countries can help the developing ones with effective population planning, improved primary health care and, above all, a reinforced and extended multilateral trading system and an open global economy to facilitate trade and investment flows to developing countries. There is now a greater need than ever for multilateral institutions and multilateral cooperation. The world of the 1990s bears little resemblance to the world of 1945, when the United Nations system was set up. Nation States, the basic units of the United Nations system, have less and less control over the external forces that are shaping the future. The United Nations system, for all its shortcomings, is the only available universal system. It has to rise up to the new challenges facing mankind if it is not to become irrelevant.

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Apart from the gap between rich and poor, one of the major challenges facing the international community and one that requires a multilateral approach is the environment. The environment is our common heritage. Environmental degradation and the depletion of the ozone layer endanger all mankind. The United Nations is best placed to coordinate efforts and to tackle urgent environmental issues, which are complex, multifaceted and related to issues of development.

The other problem that requires a global approach is the drug problem. The drug trade can survive only if the forces of supply and demand are at work. The problem has to be tackled multilaterally, at the sources of production and in the countries that are the major markets for drug suppliers.

The global community has a stake in the success of the United Nations. Singapore will play its part in ensuring that the common aspirations of mankind, as enshrined in the United Nations Charter, are realized.

Mr. SEY (Gambia): Exactly a year ago the World Summit on the Child was convened in this Hall, attended by several Heads of State, including His Excellency Alhaji Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara, President of the Republic of the Gambia. The high-powered representation at the Summit, the solemnity of the occasion and the important and far-reaching decisions that were taken, culminating in the adoption of the Charter on the Rights of the Child, testify to the importance attached to women and children. It is in the name of these two most vulnerable groups, whose hopes and survival are reposed in the United Nations system, that I should like to congratulate Ambassador Shihabi on his election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session. I am confident that, as a seasoned diplomat endowed with the necessary skill and experience, he will steer our deliberations to a successful conclusion, and that the hopes and aspirations that were aroused at that Summit will continue to be in the forefront of our deliberations throughout this session so that the welfare and interests of these target groups will always be paramount in the programmes and activities of the United Nations system.

It is also a considerable pleasure for me to pay a tribute to his predecessor, Mr. Guido de Marco of Malta, for the very able manner in which he guided the deliberations of the forty-fifth session of the Assembly.

My delegation would also like to place on record its appreciation and gratitude to our Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, and his staff for having conducted the affairs of the Organization in such a manner that the Organization has been given an invigorated role as an effective instrument for the protection and maintenance of international peace and security.

I should also like to seize this opportunity to convey, on behalf of the Government of the Gambia and my delegation, our heartfelt congratulations to

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the Governments of the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania on their admission as new Members of the United Nations. The admission of these States as new Members is in accordance with the principle of universality of our Organization, and we look forward to their active participation and their positive contributions to the cause of peace and international understanding in the comity of nations. With regard to the two Koreas in particular, we hope that their simultaneous membership will create a favourable atmosphere leading to the peaceful reunification of the Korean peninsula.

The forty-sixth session of the Assembly is taking place against the backdrop of dramatic changes in international relations characterized by the end of the cold war and bipolarity, as well as by increased pressure for wider democratization and respect for human rights. For us in the Gambia, the concepts of political pluralism and respect for human rights constitute the cardinal principles of our domestic and foreign policies and we cannot but welcome these developments. Human rights are desirable for their own sake because they promote the individual's well-being. They are also desirable for society as a whole because they promote economic, social and political development. However, the concept of human rights should not be based on social and political expediency. The concepts of democracy and political pluralism can be meaningful only if they are based on established social rules - the rule of law - that govern and protect human behaviour. Thus in its full meaning, the concept of human rights presupposes the voluntary assumption of moral obligations, self-discipline, order, responsibility, duty and accountability.

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In this sense, therefore, political development and economic welfare are inseparable from respect and protection of human rights and human dignity. This calls for a fight against poverty, hunger, disease, underdevelopment and racism; a fight for the welfare of the most vulnerable: women, children, old people, the sick and the disabled, the migrant and the refugee. In short, human rights are the right to development aimed primarily at the welfare of the human being.

It is against this background that we continue to champion the cause of human rights, particularly in Africa and our subregion. As the headquarters of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies, the Gambia is well placed to take up this responsibility. We shall continue to use the good offices of these institutions for monitoring the progress, or otherwise, of the furtherance of human rights and for teaching and research. We hope that the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights will offer a unique opportunity for all concerned to address these very significant issues, and we look forward to the Conference with a large measure of hope and encouragement.

If respect for human rights and political pluralism is the sine qua non for the attainment of social and economic development, so too is respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all States, rich or poor, big or small, which is indispensable for the maintenance of world peace and security. That is why the successful campaign in the Gulf region to resist aggression and to restore the inalienable rights of the Kuwaiti people constitutes an important milestone in the history of the United Nations. For around this time last year the world was on the brink of a crisis with uncertain but terrifying ramifications, and it is thanks to the united front

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adopted by our Organization that the conflict was contained and sanity and the rule of law in inter-State relations restored.

The conflict in the Gulf region may be over, but the crisis still remains and will remain for so long as the relevant Security Council resolutions are not implemented. My delegation therefore calls on Iraq to comply with all United Nations resolutions, for in so doing it will contribute towards the peace and security of the region and also bring to a speedy end the long and unnecessary suffering of the Iraqi people.

In the aftermath of the Gulf crisis, the world view about the role and efficacy of our Organization has improved tremendously, and the United Nations has emerged from the crisis with its reputation not only intact but considerably enhanced. At the same time, one must recognize and applaud the cooperation and solidarity of the States in the region in resisting aggression, for without this cooperation and solidarity the task of the United Nations would have been more difficult to discharge. My delegation would therefore like to congratulate once more the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council, in particular, for their unity of purpose and action, which will serve as a general principle for regional cooperation in resolving regional conflicts.

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Peace in the Gulf can be durable only if it is linked to a comprehensive resolution of the problem in the Middle East. As is now widely acknowledged, the Palestinian issue is the crux of the problem in the Middle East. It is the view of my delegation that the volatile situation in the Middle East will persist as long as the Palestinians are denied their basic, legitimate and inalienable rights to self-determination and a homeland. Apart from the political, social and economic considerations involved in the Palestinian issue, there is also the intrinsic question of human rights. The human rights of the Palestinians, their right to self-determination, to live in peace in their homeland, their freedom of speech, movement and assembly, their right to prosperity and other civil rights have for long been denied to them, despite several General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on the matter. This situation is totally unacceptable. It poses a grave threat to international peace, security and stability, and all efforts must be deployed for their effective and unconditional implementation.

Our policy position is based on such fundamental principles as self-determination, non-use of force, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and respect for human rights. We are thus supportive of the general view expressed in this Assembly for a comprehensive, just and durable Middle East peace settlement. Israel and its Arab neighbours must also live in peace with each other within secure borders if this objective is to be attained. Any comprehensive peace settlement, therefore, must be based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the principle of territory for peace. My delegation looks forward to the convening of an international conference on the Middle East in October, under the joint chairmanship of the

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United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. We hope to see full and active participation by the Palestinians in this peace process.

I cannot conclude my statement on the Middle East without reference to hostage-taking in the region. The Gambia regards hostage-taking, of any kind, as an act of terrorism and a violation of basic human rights. We therefore call for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages. We have noted with satisfaction the recent releases and urge the Secretary-General to spare no effort to help obtain the release of all hostages in the region.

The dismantling of apartheid is indeed an intricate part of the pursuit of peace, progress and collective security. For apartheid is a threat to world peace and an affront to human dignity.

To judge from events of the past year, despite some set-backs, continued international pressure on the Pretoria regime has yielded some positive results. Nevertheless, it is the view of my delegation that this systematic dismantling of the legislative pillars of apartheid does not go far enough. What is urgently required is the practical elimination of apartheid from all facets of South African society and this calls for the enfranchisement of all South Africans. My Government is unreservedly committed to the attainment of this objective. We shall therefore continue to seek the release of all political prisoners, the desegregation of all public institutions and the exercise of full universal adult suffrage. We also look forward to the successful convening of an all-party conference on a new constitution leading to the establishment of a non-racial, united and democratic South Africa.

The Abuja Declaration on South Africa adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) at its twenty-seventh ordinary session spells out clearly the African position on the

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issue. We look forward to the continued support of the international community for a successful resolution of this very protracted and vexed problem. We also fervently hope that our brothers and sisters in South Africa will close their ranks and stop the senseless bloodshed that threatens to derail the vital negotiation process.

When I addressed the Assembly last year the situation in Liberia was horrendous and the plight of the people of that sister Republic very pathetic indeed. However, with the persistent determination of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to find a regional solution to the crisis, the situation has now stabilized and the prospects for a durable solution are far greater now than before. This is largely due to the fact that there is now total commitment to the ECOWAS peace plan by all the States in the subregion as well as the parties to the conflict. I should therefore like to pay a tribute to the members of the ECOWAS Standing Mediation Committee and the Committee of Five on Liberia for their wisdom and determination to resolve the crisis through dialogue and negotiation, in the unswerving conviction that the conflict can be solved only through the democratic process of free and fair elections under international supervision.

In this connection, my delegation once again appeals to the parties in the Liberian conflict to continue to observe the cease-fire agreement and to work under the aegis of the ECOWAS peace plan for the restoration of peace and normalcy in Liberia. In the same vein, my delegation appeals to the international community to provide the necessary support and assistance to ECOWAS and its peace-keeping monitoring group (ECOMOG) in Liberia to enable the latter effectively to discharge its responsibilities, which are not only military in nature but also have a humanitarian dimension.

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Increased attention is now being rightly focused on restructuring and revitalizing the United Nations system. This process is aimed at enabling the United Nations to perform better and to be more cost efficient in peace-keeping and in the pursuit of social and effective development, as outlined in the Charter. This issue will engage our constant attention during this session. In consideration of the very analytic and sound positions taken on the matter, after successive consultations, by both the Group of 77 and other regional groups, including the African Group, my delegation is hopeful that with the necessary will the noble objectives we have collectively set for ourselves will be attained.

Enhancing the role of the United Nations is one thing; making collective security work is another. The latter is the sacred duty of the United Nations, entrusted to it by the Charter. However, this duty can be exercised beneficially and meaningfully only if all Member States, individually and collectively, play their active role in the search for peace. This is what makes for our collective security. It is also the only guarantee to make the new found relevance of the system work for all nations, rich and poor alike. The United Nations has been making a valuable contribution towards resolving long-standing problems such as those in Afghanistan, Cyprus, Western Sahara and Cambodia, and my delegation believes that the efforts of the Secretary-General are highly commendable and deserve our support to ensure a successful resolution of these seemingly intractable conflicts. The Gambia for its part will support these and other initiatives in the quest to attain self-determination, peace and stability the world over.

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The need to rid the world of all types of weapons of mass destruction - nuclear, chemical and biological - and to ensure that mankind's energies and resources are diverted to the improvement of the quality of life here on Earth is becoming increasingly desirable and urgent. My delegation is indeed encouraged by the keen attention and considerable time and resources devoted to this issue by the United Nations.

Developments in the international political scene provide a source of hope to many countries, including the Gambia. However, development in the international economic scene, in the process of multilateral trade negotiations, is a source of frustration and disappointment to many countries, including my own. These disappointments and frustrations are not only under review as an agenda item during this session, but have been the subject of detailed comments by speakers before me. I would therefore like to confine my observations to the report of the Final Review and Appraisal on the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development.

That programme gave rise to very high hopes when it was launched four years ago. It was inspired by a good motive - the desire to improve the quality of life of African peoples. It failed to fulfil the hopes placed in it for the following reasons: first, it would seem that the international community only paid lip service to the Programme as the net flow of resources to Africa actually declined during the plan period, 1986 to 1990. Secondly, the programme overlapped with painful structural adjustment programmes, which were implemented at great risks to national political stability. Thirdly - and this is important - the Programme was an attempt to isolate development and growth in the African countries from the global economic scene. It

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therefore became at best dysfunctional and inappropriate in its partial setting.

It is estimated that by the end of this year world economic output will grow by only 1.2 per cent as compared to 2.1 per cent last year. This implies that our hitherto deteriorating economic condition will inevitably be further exacerbated. Despite the steady improvement in the overall external debt situation, a major concern in Africa, particularly in our sub-Saharan region, is that foreign debt continues to grow faster than income and exports. This situation is clearly unsustainable, particularly when cognizance is taken of the fact that a large part of our current borrowing is simply for the purpose of retiring old debt. It is, therefore, my delegation's view that if this trend continues unabated, external debt will remain a very serious impediment to sustainable growth and development.

The need to redress the present economic imbalance requires international collaboration and endeavour. In this regard, my delegation is glad to note that the Group of 7, in their joint communiqué, issued in London in July 1991, emphasized not only the need to deal effectively with Africa's debt problem, but also the desirability of encouraging multilateral efforts for sustained economic growth and development. We agree that this calls for a successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round, the reversal of protectionism, an increase in trade flows and confidence-building initiatives leading to the integration of the economy of our countries into the multilateral trade system.

From the aforementioned perspective one can discern why the Programme of Action was indeed not a panacea for our economic woes. Being bereft of an integrative and global approach, it resulted in compounding our economic problems. This, in essence, was its nemesis. There is now a call for a new pact between Africa and the international community. While urging African

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countries to pursue sound fiscal, management and investment policies, it calls for the adoption of a new conceptual framework beyond the rigid International Monetary Fund structural adjustment concept. We therefore welcome the proposal of the Government of Japan for a summit meeting with African countries to address Africa's severe economic problems. We hope that such a meeting will give a fresh impetus and provide new perceptions of Africa's problems and of the solutions to these problems.

It goes without saying that no meaningful and balanced economic development can occur without due regard to environmental concerns. In the realm of human welfare and progress, therefore, the pursuit of economic development and the protection of the environment are inextricably linked. Balanced, meaningful and sustainable development is based on the preservation and protection of a clean and healthy environment. The Government of the Gambia places high priority on environmental issues, particularly the efficient management and utilization of the Earth's resources, climatic changes, pollution, and the dumping of hazardous substances, particularly toxic wastes, which pose a grave threat to the environment. To arrest, or at least contain, this crisis, it is our view that economic policies should ensure that the utilization of the Earth's resources is sustainable in the long run. What is needed, therefore, are policies and strategies to preserve and safeguard the environment for the present and future generations. This calls for a collective mobilization and pooling of our resources and efforts to protect the environment and ensure proper accountability.

The Gambia, therefore, looks forward to the successful convening in Brazil, next year, of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. In the meantime, we urge the active participation of all Member States in the negotiation and ongoing consultations leading to the convening

(Mr. Sey, Gambia)

to this Conference. It is our fervent hope that this important event will be a watershed in our search for an international solution to this man-made ecological problem.

The main thread running through my statement concerns the questions of human rights, security, the environment and development. These issues are intricately linked and have been adequately dealt with in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the United Nations. In concluding my remarks, I should like to remind this Assembly of the words of the Secretary-General:

"No system of collective security will remain viable unless workable solutions are sought to the problem of poverty and destitution, afflicting the greater part of the world.

"A reinvigoration of the North-South dialogue has now become more urgent than ever. Fortunately, conditions exist now for advancing it constructively without a needless overlay of rhetoric or ideological controversy." (A/46/1, sect. VIII)

I cannot agree more with these words, and the United Nations as the embodiment of our hopes and aspirations should endeavour to attain these goals. This is the vision set for it by its founders and it is our duty to translate this vision into reality for the welfare of humanity.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker in the general debate for this meeting.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. MENON (India): My delegation regrets that the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, in his statement at this morning's General Assembly meeting, sought to embroil the Assembly in polemics which serve neither the purpose of normalizing Indo-Pakistan relations nor the wider purposes of this Assembly. His references were selective and misleading, and have no basis in reality.

Self-determination as defined by Pakistan could be a prescription for perpetrating terrorism and disorder and bringing about the disintegration of nation-States around the world. Self-determination cannot be applied to territories that are a part of sovereign and independent States. The phoney and selfish nature of Pakistan's espousal of the principle of self-determination becomes obvious when we realize that it is inciting terrorism, secessionism, obscurantism and fanaticism in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, and at the same time talking glibly about self-determination in that state.

The accession to India of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, like that of the numerous other constituent provinces of the Indian union, is final. Any attempt to resuscitate the issue, especially in the misleading manner adopted by Pakistan, is not only tendentious and anachronistic but infructuous as well.

(Mr. Menon, India)

The crux of the matter is Pakistan's open interference in India's internal affairs through active involvement with terrorists and secessionist elements. Pakistan's own newspapers and nationals have corroborated that fact. A host of respected international political figures and scholars have testified to Pakistan's involvement. There is hardly an eminent international newspaper, journal or news agency whose representatives have not corroborated Pakistan's involvement based on direct evidence collected by them. Pakistan's own leaders and senior officers, by implication and sometimes even directly, have admitted in informal talks the involvement of their Government and security forces with the terrorists and with secessionist elements. Almost all the violations by Pakistan of the line of actual control in recent months have been designed to provide cover for terrorists armed and trained in Pakistan to cross over to the Indian side of the line of actual control and infiltrate into Indian territory.

I could have given numerous and extensive references and quotations to prove my point, but the evidence is too massive, unmistakeable and overwhelming to need any labouring or any external monitoring or further proof.

The representative of Pakistan referred to alleged human rights violations in Kashmir. For Pakistan to support terrorists who are engaged in one of the most brutal, extensive and callous instances of human rights violations and then attempt to indict India for such violations does not carry any credibility at all. And what about Pakistan's own violations of human rights in its territory: the use of tanks to quell riots in Baluchistan or the instances in the province of Sindh about a year ago of dragging hundreds of people out of their homes and even starving them?

(Mr. Menon, India)

India's democratic constitutional guarantees and safeguards for human rights operate in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, as they do in other states of the Indian union. Violations are promptly investigated, judicial procedures are set in motion and wrongdoers are brought to book. At the same time, it is the elementary duty of every State to protect innocent lives and combat terrorism.

What is needed today is a clear-cut demonstration by Pakistan through actual action on the ground of its intention to maintain good-neighbourly relations with India. So long as Pakistan continues to violate universally recognized norms of conducting bilateral relations, the reiteration of its desire to settle bilateral disputes peacefully will not carry any conviction.

The Simla agreement between India and Pakistan is not a recipe merely for solving individual problems; it is a mutually agreed upon framework for conducting good-neighbourly relations. That agreement helped in maintaining peace in our region for more than 18 years. Once Pakistan started violating the agreement by indulging in anti-Indian propaganda, by internationalizing bilateral issues and by starting to interfere in our internal affairs through assistance to terrorism and secessionism, the entire basis of goodwill and cooperation between our two countries was undermined.

We still hope, however, that Pakistan will realize the gravity of indulging in its State-sponsored terrorism and in its activities directed against the Indian states of Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir, and will return to the Simla agreement in letter and in spirit.

I can assure this Assembly that India will not be found wanting in reciprocating any such move on the part of Pakistan.

Mr. MARKU (Albania): I apologize for taking up the time of the General Assembly after the constructive statements made by many honourable speakers. However, I have to clarify some issues about which His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Greece, Mr. Samaras, spoke here last Friday, 27 September, referring to my country.

In the statement of the Albanian Foreign Minister, Mr. Muhamet Kapllani, it was pointed out that Albania is experiencing a democratic revival aimed at realizing the freedom of the individual and his well-being. The small ethnic groups in Albania are also enjoying the fruits of the democratic process my country is undergoing at present.

Proceeding from the principles of building a truly democratic and humanitarian State, the citizens of the Republic of Albania, irrespective of what nationality they belong to, enjoy equal rights, like those of any other citizen, in all aspects of life. At no time and under no circumstances does the Republic of Albania condition rights on inter-State bargains or conjunctural circumstances. The Greek minority who live in Albania - who number about 60,000 according to the last census, of 1988, and not several hundred thousand as claimed by the Foreign Minister of Greece - are not deprived of those rights. The Greek minority enjoy the same rights as the Albanian people.

With the establishment of a pluralistic system in Albania hardly a year ago, that minority has enjoyed the right to political organization, even creating its own party, which took part in the pluralistic elections. Today it also has its own representatives in the Albanian Parliament alongside the other Albanian political parties.

(Mr. Marku, Albania)

The population of that minority has been integrated in all the political and State structures without any discrimination. It enjoys the right to use its mother tongue and to schooling in Greek; it has its own press in its native language. There is also a pedagogical institute which trains teachers of Greek; there is a Chair of Greek language. In addition, the Greek minority enjoys the right to their Orthodox beliefs and to practise religion in churches and religious institutions.

(Mr. Marku, Albania)

I wish to refer now to the comparison made by Mr. Samaras between the Greek minority, which comprises several thousand inhabitants, and more than 3 million Albanians who have lived in their own land for thousands of years but were separated from their native nation at the beginning of the century and annexed to another State in the Balkans. Mr. Samaras's comparison was unfounded and devoid of any constructive spirit.

Having said this, I reiterate that the Republic of Albania, which has embarked on the road to full democracy, is building a State based on the rule of law, where human rights and democratic values are respected. If such rights of the Albanian people were violated in the past, the Greek national minority was not alone in this respect. To mention the violation only in relation to this minority is not just or fair.

I should like also to remind the Greek delegation that whenever they speak fervently about the rights of the Greek minority in Albania they ought to speak just as fervently about the Cameria question - an open sore that should be properly dealt with and considered by the Greek Government and others who care about human and minority rights. This issue cannot be escaped if we are to succeed in our attempts to build a new Europe based on the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris and other international instruments.

Mr. UMER (Pakistan): The representative of India, in exercise of his right of reply, has raised certain points that are as far removed from reality as they are self-serving and misleading. This Assembly is entitled to be apprised of the factual position. The statement by the leader of the Pakistan delegation earlier today effectively rebutted most of the points that have just been made by the representative of India. However, I should like to reiterate and elaborate our position on some of them to set the record straight.

(Mr. Umer, Pakistan)

It cannot be denied that Kashmir remains a disputed territory. There is no legal, political or moral ground to claim otherwise. The Kashmir dispute is still on the agenda of the Security Council, whose relevant resolutions, calling for the determination of its future dispensation, through a free and impartial plebiscite under United Nations auspices, remain operative. India's assertion that the people of Kashmir have decided to accede to it by virtue of the elections held in the occupied territory under Indian control was clearly rejected by the Security Council in its resolutions 91 (1951) of 30 March 1951 and 122 (1957) of 24 January 1957. Obviously, therefore, Kashmir is a dispute still to be solved in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

The representative of India has referred also to the Simla Agreement in connection with the Kashmir dispute. I should like to stress that the Simla Agreement recognizes Kashmir as an outstanding dispute awaiting a peaceful settlement. Let me take this opportunity to restate Pakistan's commitment to a peaceful settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions and in accordance with the spirit of the Simla Agreement.

At the same time, the point must be made that the Simla Agreement does not prevent Pakistan from raising the issue at the United Nations, where it is still on the agenda of the Security Council. Paragraph 1 of the Simla Agreement specifically provides that the United Nations Charter "shall govern" relations between the parties, and does not exclude resort to the pacific settlement of disputes, as provided for in the Charter of the United Nations. It is therefore fallacious to contend that Pakistan has departed from the letter and the spirit of the Simla Agreement.

(Mr. Umer, Pakistan)

The representative of India has also made totally unwarranted remarks about the internal affairs of my country. I choose not to respond to those remarks even though they constitute gross interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan. I should like merely to remind the representative of India that my delegation referred to the conditions in the Indian-occupied Kashmir because Kashmir is a disputed territory and the people of Kashmir have yet to exercise their right to self-determination.

The fundamental cause of the current indigenous uprising in the Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir can be traced to India's denial of the right to self-determination of the people of the territory. India's attempts to suppress the uprising through massive violations of human rights have failed to subdue the struggle of the Kashmiri people.

Even though the Government of India has tried to erect a wall of silence around the occupied territory the heart-rending cries of the Kashmiri people have reached the portals of the international community. In February this year Congressman Dan Burton introduced in the United States Congress a resolution deploring the Indian atrocities. On 18 April the European Parliament passed a resolution on human-rights violations in Kashmir. The human-rights group of the British Parliament has also formed a subcommittee on Kashmir to facilitate the restoration of basic rights, including the right of self-determination, to the people of Kashmir.

In three reports, spread over 385 typewritten pages, Justice Bahauddin Farooqi - a respected former Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court - has catalogued the atrocities committed by the Indian forces in the occupied territory. Bob Wylie, in an article captioned "The Valley on Fire", which appeared recently in The Guardian of London, quoted from these reports in the following words:

(Mr. Umer, Pakistan)

"The abuse of human rights here is unprecedented. It is difficult to imagine the scale of what is going on. There are more than 4,000 petitions of habeas corpus pending at Srinagar High Court alone. We know of no conviction of any member of the security forces for any of these violations.

"Despite all the might and the reign of terror unleashed by the Indian forces, the determination of the Kashmiri people is getting stronger and stronger with every passing day and with each incident of brutality."

In an attempt to divert international attention from the repressive measures adopted by India in the occupied territory, the representative of India has levelled baseless allegations against Pakistan. We reject these categorically. I should like to take this opportunity to reiterate our long-standing offer to India concerning the establishment of a group of neutral observers to investigate and monitor the situation across the line of control. India's unwillingness to accept this offer exposes the baseless character of its allegations.

There is a growing realization, on the part of the international community, of the need to take action to prevent massive violations of human rights. In the case of Kashmir, which is a disputed territory, it is all the more incumbent upon this world body to take effective action to persuade India to respect the human rights of the Kashmiri people, particularly their right to self-determination in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

The Prime Minister of Pakistan has taken a number of initiatives to engage India in a constructive and meaningful dialogue for the settlement of

(Mr. Umer, Pakistan)

outstanding disputes, particularly the Kashmir dispute, which has bedevilled relations between the two countries for more than four decades. We believe that a peaceful settlement of this dispute would reduce tension in the South Asia region and would enable Pakistan and India to concentrate on economic development and on improving the quality of life of their peoples. The Prime Minister of Pakistan sent a special envoy to India last month to convey this message to the Indian leadership. We hope that, as a result of this initiative, the two countries will make progress towards a settlement of outstanding disputes, particularly the Kashmir dispute, in the interests of peace and prosperity in South Asia.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of India who wishes to speak a second time in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. MENON (India): I need not reiterate my delegation's desire to spare the Assembly the kind of misleading rhetoric that the representative of Pakistan persists in. We surely have more constructive things to do than indulge in polemics.

India's stand on Jammu and Kashmir is clear, so let me just repeat that India is ready as always to work with Pakistan once it clarifies its intentions in this regard to normalize bilateral relations. The Pakistani representative is aware of India's many proposals in this regard. I trust Pakistan will soon see the wisdom of responding to our overtures, rather than engaging in India-baiting, for whatever short-term gains that it thinks it might obtain from such a rancourous exercise.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Pakistan who wishes to speak a second time in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. UMER (Pakistan): Let me assure the Assembly that it is not the intention of my delegation to enter into a prolonged and acrimonious debate with the Indian delegation on the question of Jammu and Kashmir. The facts are simple and well known. Jammu and Kashmir is a disputed territory whose future has to be determined in accordance with the resolutions of the Security Council.

Pakistan seeks friendly and cooperative relations with all its neighbours, particularly India. We believe that a constructive approach to

(Mr. Umer, Pakistan)

the Kashmir dispute and its peaceful resolution would pave the way for a new chapter of friendship and cooperation in south Asia which would enable the Governments in the region to concentrate their energies on economic development and bettering the lives of their peoples.

We invite India once again to eschew the path of suppression of the Kashmiri people and earnestly to pursue the course of dialogue and discussion with a view to resolving this long-outstanding dispute on the basis of the exercise of the inalienable right to self-determination by the people of Jammu and Kashmir, as pledged to them by the Security Council, and indeed by India itself.

The meeting rose at 6.55 p.m.